
The Renters' Rights Act – Update Report

Housing Scrutiny Commission

Date of meeting: 7th September 2026

Lead directors: Chris Burgin & Sean Atterbury

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
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- Author contact details: 0116 454 0245 / 0116 454 3047
- Report version number: v0.1

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report is an update to the previous report provided in July 2025 regarding the Renters' Rights Act, phase 1 of which has now been implemented. The previous report is attached at **APPENDIX 1** for reference.

2. Recommended actions/decision

- 2.1 That members read and comment on the content of the report.

3. Detailed report

- 3.1 The Renters' Rights Act 2025 is a transformative piece of legislation. The previous report set out the details of the changes the legislation will bring about and the anticipated impacts on the private rented sector (PRS) and the local authority.
- 3.2 The key changes and their scheduled implementation are listed below and this also includes the services leading in each of these areas in phase 1. It should be noted that all changes will impact across multiple teams, but we have now completed the mapping of which team leads in which area and who undertakes which part of the process so we are working efficiently and collaboratively. We are keeping this under review as more and more queries come into the Local Authority.

Planned Implementation of the Renters Rights Act	
Phase 1	
Commencement May 2026	
This phase introduces the most significant changes to the private rented sector (PRS).	
Abolition of Section 21: "No-fault" evictions using Section 21 notices became illegal for all private tenancies. The last day to serve a Section 21 notice was 30 April 2026.	
Teams leading/most impacted on Abolition of Section 21	
Homelessness Teams (prevention) Housing Solutions (PRS Team)	
New Tenancy Regime: Existing assured shorthold tenancies (ASTs) automatically convert to Assured Periodic Tenancies (rolling contracts). New fixed-term tenancies are prohibited.	

Teams leading/most impacted New Tenancy Regime
Homelessness (Prevention) Housing Solutions (PRS Team) Tenancy Management (HomeCome)
Reformed Possession Grounds: Landlords must use one of the updated, valid grounds for possession under Section 8 (e.g., selling the property, moving in a family member, tenant anti-social behaviour, or rent arrears).
Teams leading/most impacted by reformed possession grounds
Homelessness (prevention) Housing Solutions (PRS Team)
Formalised rent Increase process: Rent increases are limited to once per year, and must follow the Section 13 procedure (using a new Form 4A) with at least two months' notice.
Team leading/most impacted by the rent increase process
Homelessness (prevention) Housing Solutions (PRS Team)
Discrimination and Pets: It is illegal to discriminate against tenants who receive benefits or have children. Landlords must consider tenant requests to keep a pet and cannot unreasonably refuse them. Responses must be provided within 28 days.
Team leading/most impacted by the discrimination and pet clauses
Trading Standards Housing Standards
Bans: Rental bidding wars (accepting offers above the advertised price) and requesting more than one month's rent in advance are banned.
Team leading/most impacted by the rental bidding wars clauses
Trading Standards
Phase 2 From Late 2026 This phase focuses on new infrastructure and enforcement mechanisms PRS Database: A mandatory national database for all PRS properties will be rolled out regionally. Landlords must register their details and property compliance information (e.g., gas, electric, EPCs). Landlord Ombudsman: A new mandatory Ombudsman service will be established to provide redress for tenants and resolve disputes outside of court. Mandatory landlord membership is expected by 2028.
Phase 3 Commencement date subject to consultation

Decent Homes Standard: The government will consult on applying the Decent Homes Standard to the private rented sector, with full implementation expected around 2035.

Awaab's Law: Legally enforceable timeframes for addressing serious hazards like damp and mould will be extended to private landlords following further consultation.

- 3.3 The large raft of changes that accompany the implementation of the Renters' Rights Act will impact on the work of a number of Council services and as a result a Project Board has been established with a dedicated Project Manager and this will continue to monitor the progress of the Renters Rights Act provisions. This is to ensure that as an Authority we are prepared and that we are engaging early with key stakeholders to provide information and reassurance to those who will be impacted by these changes.
- 3.4 Other than monitoring the changes that are already in place, it is important that we also keep an eye to the future as the PRS Database will allow a much more targeted enforcement response from Regulatory Services.
- 3.5 Although the decent homes standard is not set to be introduced until 2035 (including Awaab's Law) this is likely to cause issues for the sector as bringing many PRS properties up to the standard will be significantly costly and in some cases exemptions may be required (Grade 2 listed buildings for example). This may again bring about a period where Landlords consider leaving the sector due to the cost implications but as we do now, we will continue working with the sector to help them get ready for these changes.
- 3.6 **Phase 1 implementation update**
- 3.7 Phase 1 came into effect on 1 May 2026. We are aware that there was a significant increase in the number of section 21 notices given to tenants leading up to this date, noting that these 'no fault' evictions have been abolished by the new legislation. Any Notice served under Section 21 up until the 30th April 2026 will still be processed by the Courts under the previous legislation if they were served correctly. We are aware that there is a backlog and so we will still be seeing the impact of this for in the region of another year.
- 3.8 Other than a noticeably increased number of Section 21 Notices being served in advance of the 1st May 2026, so far we have seen little change in workload or new issues being raised with the council as a result of the Renters' Rights Act. However, we anticipate that there will be a gradual increase in the coming months as issues arise that fall under the new provisions.
- 3.9 As noted above we are proactively monitoring this to ensure that we are responsive as an Authority.
- 3.10 **Enforcement**
- 3.11 Formal enforcement will be carried out by staff within Regulatory Services. Where information and/or evidence of breach has been gathered by teams within Housing

there will be an appropriate handover to ensure continuity of evidence and to maintain efficient work practices.

- 3.12 For example, in a case where a landlord seeks to regain possession of their property the Homelessness Prevention / Housing Solutions would check the validity of the notices and take steps to resolve differences or find alternative accommodation for the residents. However, if an unlawful eviction follows or if there is any other breach of the legislation, any formal enforcement action including prosecution or civil penalty would be undertaken by Housing Standards / Trading Standards.

3.13 **Funding**

- 3.14 The Government committed to provide new burdens funding to Local Authorities to assist with the implementation of this new Act and the associated works. The funding in the 2025/26 financial year was calculated based on the number of privately rented properties within each Authority captured at the census in 2021.

- 3.15 The initial new burdens funding for 2025/26 was allocated to enable the Regulatory Services IT system to be updated to capture the additional area of work, provide a comprehensive schedule of training across multiple services and to meet some of the costs of the preparatory work that has already been undertaken.

- 3.16 New burdens funding of £306k has been provided for the regulatory functions for 2026/27. This will be spent on additional staffing to meet increased demand in Housing Standards and Trading Standards. It is unclear whether further funding will be provided in subsequent years. The legislation imposes a duty to enforce, as opposed to just a power, and it is anticipated that this will result in income from civil penalties. Any such income is ring-fenced to housing enforcement and so will be used to support the regulatory function.

- 3.17 Separate funding has been given to support our housing / homelessness prevention work. This has been announced for the current and next financial year with £255,291 for 26/27 and a further £120,203 for 27/28. This will be spent on the additional staffing required to meet the demand in Homelessness and Housing Solutions. it is not clear if further funding will be required in subsequent years.

3.18 **Communications**

- 3.19 A comprehensive communications plan is in place and as a result we are confident that we have reached as wide an audience as possible to make sure renters and landlords but also services are aware of the changes and any new responsibilities.

- 3.20 We have provided detailed and specialised training to 100 staff across Housing and Regulatory Services and have a further 200 licences for more generic on-line training which is available to any staff who require this over the next year.

- 3.21 We have also been provided, as part of the training package, with 20 free memberships to the National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA) which includes access to template documents, forums and a helpdesk with experts to provide us advice on complex or unusual cases.

- 3.22 We have updated our web-pages and run a social media campaign with our communications team so we reach as wide an audience as possible.
- 3.23 We have attended a number of Landlord forums speaking about the changes and also organised 2 specialist forums just on the Renters Rights Act which were well attended. We will go on to organise a further forum for Landlords "Renters Rights Act, 6 months in" so we can engage with them to understand any issues or impacts and give suitable advice.
- 3.24 We have provided written and verbal presentations to a number of services including adults and children's social care and delivered a training session to Councillors. We have also briefed customer service team and first contact teams and provided them with guidance on how to deal with queries and where to send them within the organisation.
- 3.25 We have also undertaken an engagement exercise with letting agents to ensure that they are also aware of their responsibilities.
- 3.26 We have engaged with Tenants for Justice to ensure that they are prepared and ready for any potential increases on tenants seeking Rent Repayment Orders.
- 3.27 The Ministry of Housing and Local Government has also run a social media campaign and provided template letters for landlords although they did not provide a Local Authority Communications pack.
- 3.28 As you can see we have undertaken a significant amount of communications around the implementation of the act and this also may be a contributing factor to the low number of contacts we have had to date as we have made a lot of effort to ensure that Landlords, tenants and services knew in advance about the changes.
- 3.29 The Ministry of Housing and Local Government has also run a social media campaign and provided template letters for landlords.

4. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency, and other implications

4.1 Financial implications

As an update report, there are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Known new burdens funding for the implementation of the Renters Rights Act and associated homelessness prevention work is outlined in the table below:

	Renter's Rights Act	Homelessness Prevention
2025/26	£142k	£0
2026/27	£307k	£255k
2027/28	not known	£120k

Signed: Stuart McAvoy – Head of Finance

Dated: 27 May 2026

4.2 Legal implications

This is an updating information report for noting and whilst no direct legal implication arise, lead teams and Regulatory services should capture enforcement activity to evidence compliance with the general statutory duty under section 107 of the Renters Rights Act 2025 and be in a position to comply with the duty to report (section 110) when the Secretary of State publishes Regulations.

Signed: F. Hajat Qualified Lawyer

Dated: 28 May 2026

4.3 Equalities implications

Our Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires us to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 (sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, age) and those who do not. The Council also has an obligation to treat people in accordance with their Convention rights under The Human Rights Act, 1998.

This update report sets out progress on the implementation of the Renters' Rights Act and the associated changes to council services. The Act is expected to have a positive impact for many tenants in the private rented sector, including people from protected groups who may be at greater risk of disadvantage or discrimination.

It is important to monitor service demand, customer contact and emerging issues to identify any disproportionate impacts and ensure communications, engagement and enforcement activity remain accessible and inclusive. Equality Impact Assessments should be completed or updated where appropriate as further phases are introduced and services are developed.

Signed: Surinder Singh, Equalities Officer

Dated: 27 May 2026

4.4 Climate Emergency implications

Housing is responsible for around a third of direct carbon emissions in Leicester, with PRS housing often being the lowest performing in terms of energy efficiency.

The Renters' Rights Act is likely to have a positive impact on raising standards of energy efficiency and therefore reducing fuel poverty and carbon emissions, including through:

- Mandatory disclosure of compliance information on the PRS database may lead to more identification of sub-standard properties in relation to energy efficiency and subsequently more enforcement action.
- The introduction, subject to the outcome of consultation, of the Decent Homes Standard in the PRS will lead potentially to energy efficiency improvements where required to meet the standard.

Signed: Phil Ball, Sustainability Officer Ext. 37 2246

Dated: 27 May 2026

4.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

N/A

5. Background information and other papers:

N/A

6. Summary of appendices:

7. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

8. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why?